

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 remain pending. Claims 1-4 and 5 have been amended. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the pending rejection based on the following comments.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

Claims 2-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as failing to particular point out the present invention. Claims 2-4 have been amended by changing "said determining step" to "said determining available times step" so as to unambiguously refer to the proper element in claim 1. In view of this amendment, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 1-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,389,454 to Ralston et al. ("Ralston"). In discussing the Ralston reference, Applicant is making no admission that this reference has a filing date that predates the present invention.

According to an embodiment of the present invention, a client/server/database system is created that may make the processing of client requests more efficient. For example, a task request is sent from a client to a server system that includes patient identification and resource identification. It is then determined at the server system whether schedules associated with the patient identification and resource identification are stored in local memory to the server system.

If they are stored locally, then the server system can respond to the task request. If they are not, then the server system can load the necessary data from database into the local memory of the server system.

Claims 1 and 5 have been amended to bring out this feature of the present invention. For example in claim 1, the server system receives the task request from the client and determines whether schedules associated with information in the task request are stored in local memory to the server system. If it is not, then such schedule information is loaded from an external database. In one example, if the schedule information is stored locally, then the server system can respond in a quicker manner than in the alternative, namely retrieving the scheduling information from an external database.

In Ralston, all schedule information is retrieved from external facilities and databases when the client seeks to schedule a resource in one or more of those facilities. For example, as seen at Col. 5, lines 17 et seq., once a valid scheduling request is formulated at the server, the server then transmits the request to the remote facility. Thus, there is no determination as to whether the server has the schedule information stored locally; the information is retrieved from external facilities in all cases. Further support for this is shown at Col. 6, lines 28-51. Assuming that schedule information is retrieved from the remote facilities and stored at the server when an appointment is made, the schedule information is lost. As seen in this section, when rescheduling an appointment, the server has to once again retrieve scheduling information from the facilities, presumably because the information is not stored locally.

In view of the above reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

For all the above reasons, the Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (202) 220-4255 to discuss any matter concerning this application. The Office is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayments under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or § 1.17 to Deposit Account No. 11-0600.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: 2/17/04

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